

DIVISION OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY  
OFFICE OF PROGRAM SERVICES  
PROGRAM PROFILE

## Oxford Houses

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### **Who Can I Contact At DBHR For More Information?**

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### **What Is The Program Description?**

Oxford Houses are peer-run residences that are alcohol- and drug-free housing for adults in recovery. They are based on a national model used in 41 states. There are no staff or services in the house. The houses are democratically self-governed by the residents and are financially self-supporting. There is zero tolerance for alcohol or drug use. Seven to ten residents live in each home. The residents decide on admissions and circumstances where residents are asked to leave (i.e., alcohol or drug use, non-payment of rent, disruptive behaviors). Residents typically have completed residential chemical dependency treatment. Some may be getting out of prison or jail after participating in a treatment program while incarcerated. Applicants must be abstinent to be considered for residency.

Oxford houses are rented on the open market and each house is independent. Under the Federal Fair Housing Act, adults in recovery have protection in housing. Oxford houses are a shared housing situation. Houses do not require licensing or certification. DBHR does not supervise Oxford houses or control admissions.

### **What Populations Are Served/ Who Is Eligible For These Services?**

Adults who have completed inpatient residential treatment or are actively in an outpatient chemical dependency treatment program are eligible. Approximately 70% of Oxford House residents are male and 30% are female. Some of the houses accommodate children. Visitation of houses by the children of residents is common for both the women's and men's houses. Some of the Oxford Houses will also consider applications from incarcerated persons who are in recovery.

### **How Many People Are Served During The Biennium?**

Over 3,200 individuals were provided recovery housing through Oxford House, Inc., in Washington State during the 2007- 09 Biennium. There is no limit on the length of stay. The average length of stay for women is 7-9 months and 12-24 months for men.

In Washington State as of January 2010, there are 212 houses with 1,754 beds covering 20 counties. There are six Outreach Workers in Washington State who are responsible for approximately 35 houses and 291 residents.

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**What Is The Biennial Funding Amount And Source(s)?**

Federal funds of \$100,000 are used to maintain a revolving loan fund to open new houses with a 99% to 100% payback. Houses in Washington State that are in default of paying back the loan within a two-year period have a penalty of 25% or \$25.00 (whichever is higher) against them due to federal regulations. Other states across the nation have a payback of only 30% to 70%.

Federal funds of \$467,754 are through a contract with Oxford House, Inc., which pays for wages, administrative costs, and benefits for six Oxford House Outreach Representatives in Washington State.

**What Would Be The Impact If This Program Was No Longer Available?**

There would be an enormous loss (over 3,486 beds each biennium) of recovery housing resources in the state of Washington. The estimated cost to each resident is under \$13.00 a day and there is no other cost effective housing available in Washington for those in recovery.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism/National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIAAA/NIDA) completed studies in 2008 that showed the value of Oxford houses. The studies found that up to 85% of the residents who went directly into an Oxford houses upon completion of inpatient treatment stayed in recovery after one year. In the same studies, NIAAA/NIDA showed that only 50% of recovering persons who do not go to a recovery house, but back into the environment they left, have been able to remain alcohol-free after eight months to one year.

**What Agencies Collaborate With DBHR To Deliver These Services?**

Coordinating agencies that have an informal relationship with local Oxford Houses include counties, DSHS Administrations, real estate agencies and landlords, local chemical dependency treatment agencies including residential and detoxification, drug courts, correctional agencies, and women-specific treatment programs. Oxford houses operate entirely independently of DBHR; however, DBHR does have a revolving loan fund that allows new Oxford houses to get loans for first and last months rent in order to commence operations and open new houses in needed areas.

**What Are The Sources For Program Data Or More Information?**

The Alcohol and Drug Help Line's toll-free number is 1-800-562-1240 (from within Washington State) or 206-722-3700 for Seattle area residents. Information is also available in the HRSA/DBHR Provider Directory, Appendix H, which is found at this website address: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dasa/services/certification/Directory/Directory.shtml>

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**Any Other Comments?**

The National website for Oxford House is: <http://www.oxfordhouse.org/userfiles/file/>.

This link allows you to click on the state in question and it will give you a pop-up of all the cities that have Oxford Houses in that state. Click on the city and the house you want to see, and a pop-up will show you a picture of the house. It will also give you the name, address, phone number, a map and directions, and the number of vacancies in the house.

The Washington State website is [http://www.oxfordhouse.org/directory\\_listing.php](http://www.oxfordhouse.org/directory_listing.php).

This link allows you to click directly on a city in Washington State that has Oxford Houses. Click on the house you want to check and a pop-up will show you a picture of the house. It will show the name of the house, address, phone number, a map and directions to get to the house, and the number of vacancies in the house.